

LIFT SECRECY FROM BAY OF PIGS INQUIRY

BY WILLIAM MOORE
(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, Oct. 30 — The long-suppressed story of the Bay of Pigs fiasco began coming out today in secret testimony by Whiting Willauer, avowed coördinator of the



Whiting Willauer

plans for the Cuban invasion under both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations.

Willauer testified that the Kennedy administration abruptly fired him and never inquired about the plans, which he had been ordered not to put in writing.

Willauer, former ambassador to Honduras and Costa Rica and a long time anti-Communist, was a commercial air line partner of the late Gen. Claire Chennault of Flying Tigers fame, and identified himself as Chennault's right-hand man from 1942 to 1953.

B-26s, Jets Needed

While the failure of the invasion in April of last year has been ascribed to President Kennedy's sudden decision to withhold air support, Willauer testified that B-26 bombers would have been necessary for low level strafing, with jets flying above them.

Willauer, who has since died, testified July 27, 1961, before the Senate internal security

subcommittee, which made his testimony public today.

Willauer said then Secretary of State Christian Herter called him in on Dec. 10, 1960, and told him:

"President Eisenhower and I have a very special job which we have chosen for you to do. What we want you to do is this: There has been

going on since March 17, 1960, the preparation of an invasion backed by the central intelligence agency but run by Cubans . . .

"I want you to be the senior partner of a partnership of two people. Your junior partner will be a top CIA man."

Quizzed by Counsel

Under questioning by J. G. Sourwine, subcommittee counsel, Willauer said the partners were to report to a "board of directors," of which he indicated Thomas Mann, now ambassador to Mexico and then assistant secretary of state, was a member. Willauer was to have access to all information.

"He and I," Willauer said, "were both convinced that this thing should not be done or undertaken unless there was practically no chance that it would fail."

After the Kennedy administration was installed, Willauer said, there was a full dress meeting on Jan. 22, 1961, with Secretary of State Dean Rusk presiding and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and many other high officials present, including Allen Dulles, then director of the CIA. The whole operation, Willauer said, was reviewed.

Asked to Remain

On Jan. 26, Willauer said, Rusk asked him to remain as coördinator as did then Undersecretary of State Chester Bowles.

Other meetings were held, Willauer said, and he decided it was time to put the plan on paper. He sought an appointment with CIA officials to discuss this.

"Just on the eve of this appointment," Willauer said, "My opposite number, Mr. Tracy Barnes, my junior partner in this partnership, called me up and said:

"We can't talk to you any more. We can only talk to other people."

This happened about Feb. 1, 1961, Willauer said, and was the only official word he ever had that he was "cut out of the

operation."

"And I had nothing to do with the operation," Willauer said, "from that time on."

Willauer said he had no resentment against being cut off, explaining:

"I mean I am not running this administration. It is up to President Kennedy and the superiors to decide whom they

want to have to decide something."

"But having been asked by the secretary of state to do something, I rather thought at least that I better tell someone I wasn't able to do something."

Rusk was out of town, Willauer said, and Willauer felt that the proper official to report to was Bowles.

"I tried for 30 days straight," Willauer said. "I called his secretary every day or went up to see her. I saw him once in the hall. He said:

"I'm awfully busy. I will see you later."

"And I finally gave up after 30 days. . . .

"I just got a general run-around."

Willauer said he did not have the "vaguest idea" who ordered him fired, adding:

"I have been told by the CIA, by high officials in the CIA, that they were extremely dissatisfied by the fact that they could not continue to work with me, because they had worked with me for years and years, and, they said, very successfully."

Hits "Shabby" Treatment

Willauer said he was "amazed that I was never debriefed, as they say, and therefore never had an opportunity to express my ideas, which I think might have been of some value in the chances of the success of the operation."

Sen. Thomas J. Dodd [D., Conn.] told Willauer it was "shocking" that the coördinator was treated so "shabbily."

"When I say shabbily," Dodd replied, "I mean the welfare of the country was treated shabbily. It is just unthinkable to me that this sort of thing can happen."

"Obviously it seems to me you were a man who simply had to be consulted. . . ."

"The only thing I think was terrible, I might say unorthodox, or bad for the country," Willauer said, "was that my ideas were not picked when they decided to shift the author-

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